

especially if you are alone in the building. Keep hallways well lit when people are in the building.

Be wary of strangers claiming to be visiting pastors, students of architecture, musicians or anyone who wants to tour your building. Ask for identification before allowing access.

Make sure there is no one in the building before closing up for the day. Check bathrooms, any unlocked rooms or possible hiding spots.

DON'T DO THIS ALONE IF POSSIBLE.

MONEY HANDLING TIPS

Many churches/synagogues are robbed on the day(s) when services are held because it is expected that there will be a large amount of money around. To minimize your risk of loss, consider the following:

Limit access to money between the time it is collected and counted.

Have one person responsible for the money at each service.

Have money counted by at least two people in a secure location which is not visible to others.

After counting, secure the money in one of these ways:

- Have someone take it directly to the after-hours depository at the bank, but try to do this at slightly different times each week.
- Place it in a drop box safe at the church for later deposit.
- As a last resort, have someone take it home and secure it there for deposit the next day.

In all cases, it is wise not to have a totally predictable pattern of when money is transported.

Emergency 9-1-1

Non-Emergency 480-644-2211



Mesa Police Department
www.mesaaz.gov/police

Brochure text courtesy of the Minneapolis Police Department, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

House of Worship



Security Tips

Religious institutions are faced with the dilemma of wanting to be open and accessible to people and at the same time needing to protect their buildings and staff. The following suggestions should be considered with your particular needs and priorities in mind.

EXTERIOR SECURITY

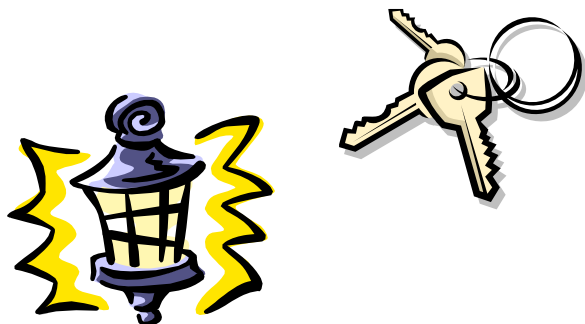
Make sure all exterior doors have good deadbolt locks and heavy duty strike plates.

If doors can be opened from the inside without a key, reinforce or replace glass in or near the door.

Secure basement or ground level windows with bars, grills or polycarbonate material.

Provide good exterior lighting around the building and in all parking areas. Replace burned-out bulbs immediately.

Have an effective key control system. Know who has which keys. If you tag keys, use a number, not a location. Keep the master list separate from the keys.



CONTROLLING ACCESS

There are two major options for controlling access while there are staff on the premises:

Lock all exterior doors and provide some combination of the following:

- Speaker system to allow staff to communicate with anyone coming to the church door;
- Mirrors, windows and/or cameras which will allow office staff to see who is at the door;
- A buzzer system which will allow staff to open the exterior door from the office.

— OR —

Leave one door open close to where staff normally are, and install a bell, buzzer or other audible signal that someone has entered the building.

In both cases, limit access within the building by locking interior doors, installing gates to close off hallways not being used and possibly locking bathrooms.

Secure wine, chalices, office, electronic equipment, and other valuable items whenever they are not in use.

Consider installing a “hold-up” alarm which can be activated by an employee

in the office by pressing a button located near the feet or legs. The alarm could signal a nearby location, such as a parsonage, adjacent school or other occupied building, where someone could call the police if the alarm was heard. (If there is an existing central station alarm, the hold-up alarm can be tied directly into the monitoring station.)

SECURITY PROCEDURES FOR STAFF

If staff or others with keys arrive at the church and it appears that illegal entry has been made, **DO NOT ENTER THE BUILDING**. Go to another location and dial **911**.

If you have entered the building and discover evidence of a burglary or other suspicious action, **LEAVE IMMEDIATELY** and call **911** from another location.

Keep **911** and other emergency numbers posted at each telephone in the building. Consider having the phone company block long distance and other services that could be billed to you on phones in locations other than offices.

If you have a cordless or cellular phone, carry it with you when you are away from the office.

Don't hesitate to call **911** if there is a suspicious person on the premises,